

# Times Herald

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## GEN. SMITH SHOULD RESIGN

It is fantastic that the Democrats would be so reckless of our national safety as to drag even the spy system into the Presidential campaign as an attempted shield against their record on communism.

But that is what they have done. And more fantastic yet, the head of the spy system is helping them do it.

Gen. Walter Bedell Smith is chief of the Central Intelligence agency. As such he has one job and one job only, to spy on communism abroad and to keep spies of communism from getting into the United States.

Within the United States it is the job of the Federal Bureau of Investigation to get inside the Communist party, spy on it and catch Communist spies, wherever they go, from White House to street corner.

What would you say if J. Edgar Hoover, chief of the FBI, were to turn up as a defense witness in a libel suit, spouting opinions about matters of high political tension and giving his views on which man in office is doing a good job or a bad one?

Hoover has been in the Department of Justice 35 years. He has been hot on the heels of the Communists all of that time. He took their measure at the very moment of their rise, in World War I, and he has never let up.

Republicans and Democrats have come and gone in all the high and low offices in this capital. Every trick and threat and blandishment and bribe they could imagine has been waved in front of his eyes, to get Hoover to pitch a political curve for one or another of them.

Who can point to a single instance in which this singularly gifted and patriotic citizen has deviated from his duty?

Surely, he has uttered in public many a time. He has appeared in movies, on the radio, in television, has written books, magazine articles, given newspaper interviews and has spoken at countless dinners and in countless meeting halls.

But what has he said? For one thing, he has educated his listeners on the importance of making law enforcement a profession so that the innocent may be protected from blundering error and the guilty identified with precision. For another, he has educated his listeners on the origins, patterns, and true character of domestic criminality.

Hoover has knocked the gaudy spots off criminal glamor, and set little boys to playing G-man, instead of gangster.

But most importantly, he has, more than any other government official, educated the nation on the chilling truth about communism, its scope, power, purposes and accomplishments.

He has done this above and beyond and outside the important work of building up the FBI as a law-enforcement organization, and the equally important work of shielding of the FBI from political penetration and perversion.

But in all his 35 years of government service, Hoover has never said anything about any President of the United States, any Secretary of State, any senator or general, that anybody could quote or point to as political absolution or political condemnation.

Contrast, on the other hand, the performance of Gen. Smith.

The Central Intelligence agency is a baby at its work, compared with the FBI. During World War II, there was formed up something called the Office of Strategic Services, under Brig. Gen. William Donovan, who had a good record in World War I as a combat officer and a following record of typical political law practice in New York State. Gen. Donovan was a titular Republican, but the first move he made in OSS was to hook up with James Roosevelt in certain maneuvers of strictly domestic flavor, too out of date and complicated to unravel here, but in essence wholly out of line with the alleged purpose of the OSS to spy and counter-spy on the national enemy spy systems abroad.

The withering Roosevelt touch put the hex on OSS from the start so that it took ultimate shape as a hangout for wealthy playboys with a Fu Manchu-E. Phillips Oppenheim mania for mystery play, professors with an itch to meddle in other people's business, and lots and lots and lots of beautiful young lady secretaries to make the day's work less burdensome.

What the taxpayers got for their money the country will never know, for OSS was operated strictly on the cash voucher system. But this much is known: when the war ended, it was knocked on the head instantly, and all records were destroyed or impounded.

The CIA was its successor, supposed to be built on the basis of bitter experience, hard realization that communism plays for keeps, and consciousness that no man knows for sure just where the enemy moves in the murky world of espionage.

Gen. Smith succeeded to command of the

CIA after a series of conspicuous failures in its leadership and organization.

He has been lavished with money, legal latitude and opportunity to get on with his job. Congress has let him alone. The newspapers have let him alone and the public has let him alone.

But the Democrats have not let him alone.

A few days ago, Sen. William Benton, the Connecticut windbag, got Smith on the witness stand in a private lawsuit. Sen. Joe McCarthy of Wisconsin has sued Benton for \$2,000,000 libel and Benton is perspiring. So—of all things—the chief of our espionage and counter espionage system turns up as one of Benton's friendly witnesses.

Everybody knows how Smith, on cross-examination, let drop some high-explosive remarks about communism's power to penetrate our government. What he said was true, and it was political dynamite. But the general, professing astonishment, begged all hands not to drag his organization into the campaign and the Republicans, like little gentlemen, went along.

They sacrificed powerful truth about a vital subject, from a supposedly competent witness, to avoid any appearance of taking political advantage at the expense of the national safety.

And what was the harvest? On Monday of this week, Smith appeared before the Democratically controlled House committee on un-American activities and gave a plain, unvarnished and inexcusable political address to the effect that Harry S. Truman is a first-class fighter against communism.

This is the same Truman who flopped at Potsdam, said that he "liked old Joe Stalin," called the Hiss case a "red herring," and has fought every attempt in Congress and out to reveal the truth about Communist penetration of our civil government.

Truman's record needs no reviewing here. We all know it.

How Smith could say what he did, knowing that record and knowing how his words would be used in this political campaign, we leave to him and his private conscience.

He has, in his appearance as a Benton defense witness and a Truman defense witness, utterly and irrevocably destroyed impartial confidence in the CIA.

The quicker he gets out and the quicker CIA is junked, the safer for this nation. One thing we cannot tolerate is the development of a politically inspired and politically influenced espionage system. No citizen, no law, no element of our national life is secure, when the chief of the CIA sets such an example for his invisible armies.